

COMPARATIVE ELECTIONS (POS 4931, SECTION
SPRING 2015

Professor Moraski
(Last updated December 11, 2014)

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Contact Information

Comparative Elections – POS 4931 (01F6)
Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays; Period 4 (10:40-11:30 am)
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Office Hours
Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays
11:30-12:30 & by appointment

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Course Description

Elections are critical junctures in political history. They are opportunities for voters to express (dis)satisfaction with government, and even authoritarian regimes may use elections as safety valves to release pent-up social discontent. In all contexts, elections can function as a rallying point for the opposition and test the government's mettle. Ultimately, electoral outcomes determine what societal interests gain voice in the corridors of political power and whether the current direction of politics continues. Yet how elections operate differs significantly, even among democracies, and such differences grant those in power a variety of rules to manipulate. Thus, existing rules that govern elections may not only make the difference between winning and losing, but parties in power also may be tempted to alter the rules to improve their electoral chances.

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Course Objectives

This course introduces students to the different ways popular votes are converted into political representation and explores how political parties across the globe navigate their electoral waters. By the end of the course, students will better understand 1) how electoral rules shape the behavior of voters, politicians, and parties; 2) scholarly recommendations about which electoral options may best advance the cause of democracy; 3) why and how elites manipulate electoral rules; and 4) how different contexts lead to different electoral outcomes.

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Student Responsibilities

Required Reading

Much of the reading for the course will come from electronic reading that I will make available on a course project site accessible via Canvas. To log in, go to <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>. In addition, we will read most of the following book, which students should purchase as indicated on the textbook adoption site for this course:

1. Schedler, Andreas, ed. 2006. *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

Grading Scale	(Grade Point Equivalent)
A = 90 OR ABOVE	4.00
A- = 87-89	3.67
B+ = 84-86	3.33
B = 80-83	3.00
B- = 77-79	2.67
C+ = 74-76	2.33
C = 70-73	2.00
C- = 67-69	1.67
D+ = 64-66	1.33
D = 60-63	1.00
D- = 57-59	0.67
E = 56 OR BELOW	0.00

Assignments and Grade Distribution

Final grades for the course will be based on the following:

1. Attendance and in-class participation (10%)
2. Participation during in-class debates (5%) [Three are scheduled. Others may be added.]
3. Paper assignment #1 (10%)
4. Paper assignment #2 (15%)
5. Two exams (30% each)

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Course Policies

Attendance & Participation

Students are encouraged to review the University's attendance policies at <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationattendance.html>.

Since class discussions and lectures often add new concepts, ideas, and interpretations to the material covered in the reading that students will be responsible for knowing, it is in your best interest to attend every class and to arrive on time.

Higher attendance rates and more frequent and higher quality participation will yield better attendance and participation grades:

- A full 10% reflects perfect attendance as well as frequent participation reflecting knowledge of the assigned readings;
- 7-9%, student attends 70-90% of class sessions with occasional (rather than frequent) participation about the topic being discussed (not necessarily based on the assigned readings, e.g., personal experience or reflection)
- 1-6%, student attends 60% or less of class sessions with the frequency of participation not considered in the score
- 0%, habitual tardiness or disruptive behavior.

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Cell Phones

Students must turn cell phones to silent before coming to class. Each time a student's cell phone rings or each time that a student texts during class, 1% will be deducted from that student's final grade (1% per instance).

Make-up Exams

Make-up exams will be arranged only for university-accepted excuses. In the event of an absence, students should provide proper documentation. In all cases, students should try to notify me prior to the exam. If a student misses an exam and cannot contact me beforehand, students should to contact me within 48 hours of the absence to receive full consideration. In almost any situation, you should be able to pass along a message via email or voicemail even if it is from a roommate or family member. Make-up exams will be given during finals week at the time designated by the Registrar's Office for the course's final exam. To preserve the integrity of the exam, the format of any make-up will differ from that of the original exam.

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Cheating & Plagiarism

All students should observe the University of Florida's standards of academic honesty. In the event that a student is found cheating or plagiarizing, s/he will automatically fail the course and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs.

Acts of plagiarism include:

- Turning in a paper or another assignment that was written by someone else (i.e., papers written by another student, a research service, or downloaded off the Internet).
- Copying, verbatim, a paragraph or significant portion of text (of eight words or more) from the work of another author without properly acknowledging the source through a commonly accepted citation style *and* using quotation marks.
- Paraphrasing (i.e., restating in your own words) text written by another author without citing that author.
- Using a unique idea or concept, which you discovered in a specific reading, without citing that author.

Persons with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Anyone with a disability should feel free to see me during office hours to make the necessary arrangements.

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Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Additional Information

Phone numbers and contact sites for university counseling services and mental health Services can be found at <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> or you may call 392-1575. To contact the University Police Department call 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

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Course Outline

(SUBJECT TO CHANGES)

Week 1 (Jan 7-9) – Introduction: Democratic Elections

- Wayne, Stephen J. 2013. “Democratic Elections: What’s the Problem?” In *Is This Any Way to Run a Democratic Election?*, Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press, 1–24.

Week 2 (Jan 12-16) – Rules and Turnout

- Franklin. 2004. *Voter Turnout and the Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Established Democracies Since 1945*, Chapters 1 & 8

Friday Debate:

- Folkes, Alex. 2004. “The Case for Votes at 16.” *Representation* 41(1): 52–56.
- Cowley, Philip, and David Denver. 2004. “Votes at 16? The Case against.” *Representation* 41(1): 57–62.

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Week 3 (Jan 19-23) – Parties and Party Systems

Monday – No Class (MLK Jr. Day)

- Ware, *Political Parties and Party Systems*, pp. 17-56

- Chandra, K. 2011. “What Is an Ethnic Party?” *Party Politics* 17(2): 151–69.

Friday, January 23: Discuss Paper Assignment #1

Week 4 (Jan 26-30) – Party Systems and Electoral Systems

- Ware, *Political Parties and Party Systems*, pp. 147-175 & 182-183
- Norris, *Electoral Engineering*, Chapter 2

Friday Debate:

- Norris, *Electoral Engineering*, Chapter 3

Week 5 (Feb 2-6) – Electoral Systems in Context

- Mainwaring, S. 1993. “Presidentialism, Multipartyism, and Democracy: The Difficult Combination.” *Comparative Political Studies* 26(2): 198–228.
- Moser, *Unexpected Outcomes*, Chapter 3

Friday Debate:

- Barkan, Joel D. 1995. “Elections in Agrarian Societies.” *Journal of Democracy* 6(4): 106–16.
- Reynolds, Andrew. 1995. “The Case for Proportionality.” *Journal of Democracy* 6(4): 117–24.

Week 6 (Feb 9-13) – Rule (Re-)Design & Malapportionment

- Donovan and Bowler. 2004. *Reforming the Republic: Democratic Institutions for the New America*, Chapters 4 & 5
- Andrews, Josephine T., and Robert W. Jackman. 2005. “Strategic Fools: Electoral Rule Choice under Extreme Uncertainty.” *Electoral Studies* 24(1): 65–84.
- Snyder, Richard, and David Samuels. 2001. “Devaluing the Vote in Latin America.” *Journal of Democracy* 12(1): 146–59.

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Week 7 (Feb 16-20) – Rules and Representation

[Wednesday, February 18 – Paper assignment #1 Due by Noon at Turnitin.com](#)

- Caul, M. 1999. “Women’s Representation in Parliament: The Role of Political Parties.” *Party Politics* 5(1): 79–98.
- Stratmann, Thomas, and Martin Baur. 2002. “Plurality Rule, Proportional Representation, and the German Bundestag: How Incentives to Pork-Barrel Differ across Electoral Systems.” *American Journal of Political Science* 46(3): 506–14.
- Schleiter, Petra and Alisa M. Voznaya. “Party System Competitiveness and Corruption.” *Party Politics* 20(5): 675-686.

Week 8 (Feb 23-27) – Exam Week

[Wednesday, February 25 – Exam 1](#)

Friday, February 27: Discuss Paper Assignment #2

Week 9 (Mar 2-6)

- Spring Break

How do we study elections that fall short of free and fair?

Week 10 (Mar 9-13) – Less than Free and Fair Elections

- Birch, Sarah. 2007. “Electoral Systems and Electoral Misconduct.” *Comparative Political Studies* 40(12): 1533–56.
- Schedler, “The Logic of Electoral Authoritarianism” (Chapter 1 in Schedler, ed.)

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Week 11 (Mar 16-20) – Electoral Competition in Authoritarian States

- Howard, Marc Morje, and Philip G. Roessler. 2006. “Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes.” *American Journal of Political Science* 50(2): 365–81.
- Case, “Manipulative Skills: How do Rulers Control the Electoral Arena?” (Chapter 6 in Schedler, ed.)
- Langston, “Elite Ruptures: When Do Ruling Parties Split?” (Chapter 4 in Schedler, ed.)

Week 12 (Mar 23-27) – How Authoritarian Incumbents Behave during Elections

- Thompson and Kuntz, “After Defeat: When Do Rulers Steal Elections?” (Chapter 7 in Schedler, ed.)
- Clark, “Armed Arbiters: When Does the Military Step into the Electoral Arena?” (Chapter 8 in Schedler, ed.)
- Way, “Authoritarian Failure: How Does State Weakness Strengthen Electoral Competition?” (Chapter 10 in Schedler, ed.)

Week 13 (Mar 30-Apr 3) – Elections & Opposition in Hybrid Regimes

- Van de Walle, “Tipping Games: When Do Opposition Rulers Coalesce?” (Chapter 5 in Schedler, ed.)
- Lindberg, “Tragic Protest: Why Do Opposition Parties Boycott Elections?” (Chapter 9 in Schedler, ed.)
- Fish, “Creative Constitutions: How Do Parliamentary Powers Shaped the Electoral Arena?” (Chapter 11 in Schedler, ed.)

Week 14 (Apr 6-10) – External Influences

- Levitsky and Way, “Linkage and Leverage: How Do International Factors Change Domestic Balances of Power?” (Chapter 12 in Schedler, ed.)
- Hartlyn and McCoy, “Observer Paradoxes: How to Assess Electoral Manipulation” (Chapter 3 in Schedler, ed.)
- Kelley, *Monitoring Democracy*, Chapter 2

Week 15 (Apr 13-17) – Election Observation

- Kelley, *Monitoring Democracy*, Chapter 3

- Snyder, “Beyond Electoral Authoritarianism: The Spectrum of Nondemocratic Regimes” (Chapter 13 in Schedler, ed.)

Friday, April 17 – Exam 2

Week 16 (Apr 20-22) – Exam Week

Monday, Complete course evaluations

Wednesday, April 22 – Paper Assignment #2 Due by Noon at Turnitin.com

Finals Week: Make-up exams as necessary

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